TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IN SUPPORT OF:

S.B. No. 217 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HATE CRIMES INVESTIGATIVE UNIT WITHIN THE DIVISION OF STATE POLICE AND REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT OF A REPORTING SYSTEM, BEST PRACTICES AND A MODEL INVESTIGATION POLICY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITS REGARDING HATE CRIMES.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY
March 3, 2022

The Division of Criminal Justice respectfully supports S.B. No. 217, An Act Establishing a Hate Crimes Investigative Unit within the Division of State Police and Requiring Development of a Reporting System, Best Practices and a Model Investigation Policy for Law Enforcement Units Regarding Hate Crimes.

The Division supports any and all enhanced efforts to investigate and prosecute hate crimes and criminal acts committed by extremist groups. Hate crimes victimize not only individuals but also harm the target community and society as a whole. A Hate Crimes Investigative Unit within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection can examine the bias motive of a particular hate crime and determine whether it is pervasive in the wider community. If given the proper resources, this Unit will strengthen law enforcement's capacity to conduct more in-depth examinations using the latest technological investigative resources needed in the Internet age. This enhanced investigative effort will help ensure that all citizens receive equal protection and raise the confidence of affected communities. As the agency responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all criminal matters in the State of Connecticut, the Division of Criminal Justice stands ready with all of its own investigatory and prosecutorial resources to assist this Unit.

In conclusion, the Division of Criminal Justice supports S.B. No. 217. We thank the Committee for affording this opportunity to provide input on this matter and would be happy to provide any additional information the Committee might require or to answer any questions that you might have.